DOCUMENT RESUME

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TITLE	The Social Environment of a Student (Part F-3 Human Competence Learning Package). Description of Teacher Inservice Education Materials.
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ABSTRACT

The described inservice learning module is designed to provide elementary and secondary school teachers with greater knowledge and understanding about the social background and interactions of their students. The basic tool in this module is a booklet, and the table of contents is presented in this descriptive report. The activities and resources involved in using this product are described. Ordering information is also included as well as a critique of the module. (JD)

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DESCRIPTION OF TEACHER IN-SERVICE EDUCATION MATERIALS

A. SUMMARY INFORMATION

Title: THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF A STUDENT (Part F-3 Human Competence Learning Package)

Publication Date(s): ca. 1975

Intended Users: Inservice teachers and graduate students interested in understanding certain behavior patterns of their students

Grade Level(s): Elementary, middle and secondary

Number: Group

Primary Focus: This provides participants with greater knowledge and understanding about the social background and interactions of the students they teach.

School subject(s) and/or in-service topic(s) covered:

The inservice topics covered have to do with the dynamics and characteristics of a school's community and its local institutions and groups. It leads to examination of the principles of development of self-concept and values of youth; conflicts between parents and children; school as a social environment and a social system; uses of power; teachers as managers of behavior; options in the classroom, etc.

What participant does in using the materials:

Participant reads booklet, and follows directions for activities, which consist of playing simulation games and discussing a number of questions on each of fifteen topics. There are pre-assessment and post-assessment activities, e.g., Pre-assessment: 1) describe five characteristics of school's local community, 2) identify five characteristics of today's youth culture, 3) describe three ways in which teacher can enhance pupil's racial or ethnic identity, etc. An example of Post-assessment: Develop a simulation game.

Resources:

Needed are: One book per participant, leader for the group, and time and space for meetings. The length of time needed to complete the course is not specified, but one session for each of the fifteen topics is recommended (by describer). Six simulation games must be included in program (names of distributors and prices included at end of book).

Describer critique:

This package is well developed, clearly written and provides a good framework for a very interesting program. It is open-ended in that it probes many questions but provides no pat answers. A group interested in learning about the dynamics of a school community and about the social environment of students -- led by a knowledgeable leader -- could have an enriching and highly stimulating experience.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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TS 37
CM 25

(TS) - social interation
(CM) - dtscipline - behavioral psychology

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1.0 PURPOSES:

The developer says:

"Many of the topics treated in this package were suggested by the author's survey of public school teachers who were asked what they wanted to know about the social environment of a student."

It is anticipated that participants in this learning package will be able to achieve the objectives of two Performance Expectations (P.E.) of the program model for the Portal School Diagnostic-Prescriptive Project, namely:

P.E. #13 in the role area "Person" which will enable participant "to be aware and have an understanding of the prevalent attitudes, values, goals and aspirations of the community in which they are working.", and

P.E. #7 in the role area "Diagnoser", which states that participants will "gather relevant information about children from home visits and other interactions with parents or guardians, i.e., information about children's behavior at home, relationships with siblings, hobbies, etc."

Completion of this package could well enhance a participant's understanding of the reasons for certain behavior patterns among students, might eliminate misconceptions or preconceptions not based on appropriate premises, and might lead to valuable clarifications of values--both for teachers and for students.

2.0 CONTENT — Scope and Sequencing of Topics:

This nineteen-page booklet has the following sections, each consisting of a list of discussion questions, sometimes preceded by an activity such as playing a simulation game:

I. Dynamics of a School's Community
II. Characteristics of Local Institutions and Groups
III. Uses of Power
IV. The Youth Culture
V. Economic Influences on Youth
VI. Race and Ethnicity
VII. Development of Self-Concept
VIII. Conflicts Between Parents and Children
IX. Values of Youth
X. School as a Social Environment
XI. School as a Social System
XII. Communication Networks in a School
XIII. Student Problems with Alcohol and Drugs
XIV. Teacher as Manager of Behavior
XV. Options in the Classroom

Before reading any of the questions: participants are directed to discuss with the instructor their answers to six pre-assessment questions.

No time restrictions are given, but it would probably be advisable to discuss not more than one topic in the course of a single session. Therefore, fifteen sessions are recommended, their distribution and length of time left to the discretion of the participants.

It does not appear imperative that the sequence of the topics as listed in the Table of Contents be maintained, but in certain cases, the suggested order seems desirable. Unless there are compelling reasons for altering the sequence to meet the needs of the group, there should be no reason for doing so.

If more appropriate, only selected parts of the material could be used.

3.0 ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES INVOLVED IN USE OF PRODUCT

3.1 Description of main in-service activities:

Participants read booklet and follow directions for activities, and discuss specified topics for each section. The steps in following the program are: 1) Discuss pre-assessment questions with the instructor, 2) Read discussion questions prior to each session and prepare answers for discussion and analysis, 3) Participate actively in simulation games, class activities and discussions for each class meeting, 4) Complete a post-assessment procedure (described below in 4.0).

3.2 Help given in use of product:

The guidebook is well organized and the instructions are clearly stated. Six simulation games (names of publisher and prices listed at the back of the package) are necessary to follow the program. An instructor (or moderator) must lead the group and coordinate the program.

4.0 EVALUATION OF TEACHER INSERVICE LEARNING

As a post-assessment activity the participants are asked to complete one of the following:

1) a social profile of a student,
2) a research paper on a topic approved by the instructor, and
3) design and produce a simulation game.

5.0 ORDERING INFORMATION

5.1 Resources required/recommended:

One book per participant - adequate space for the group to meet and have discussions - an instructor to coordinate the program - six simulation games (not provided) are required.

No time allocation is specified by the developer, but is seems logical to allow for one session per discussion topic (there are fifteen topics). There is, however, flexibility in the way the subject matter could be re-arranged, re-combined, or selectively covered.

5.2 Distributor name/address:

Teacher Corps
State University College at Buffalo
1300 Elmwood Ave.
Buffalo, N.Y. 14222
(716) 862-5012

Dr. W. Licata, Project Director
Dr. L. Sinatra, Associate Director

5.3 Components/approximate costs:

Component	Purchase	Rental	No. Req.	Reusable
THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF A STUDENT (booklet)	$1.00	No	1/person	Yes
Not supplied: Six simulation games (Names of producers and distributors listed at back of package)				
1) Beating the Economy	$12.00	No	1/group	Yes
2) Generation Gap	$15.00			
3) Ghetto	$25.00			
4) School Faculty Meeting	$ 3.00			
5) Star Power	$ 3.00			
6) The Three Rivers School Simulation Game	$ 5.00			

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6.0 HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Identification of the developer:

Frank P. Diulus, Foundation of Education Department, State University College at Buffalo developed this product.

6.2 How developed and when:

Development took place in accordance with a model which calls for a coordinator to interface with schools, teachers, administrators and the community and assess their needs and requirements based on stated objectives.

6.3 Evidence of effectiveness with users:

No formal assessment was done. Project Associate Director, Dr. Sinatra, indicated that feedback had been good, but had not been documented to date.

C. DESCRIBER CRITIQUE

Appropriateness / adaptability / technical quality:

This material appears to be very appropriate for teachers interested in learning more about the social environment of the students whom they teach. The 19-page booklet is soft-bound and of good quality. The material can be organized to suit the needs of the users in terms of sequence, numbers of participants and numbers of sessions allocated for completion of the package.

Content accuracy/social fairness/community acceptance issues:

By its very content and structure, this learning package would lead to examination and discussion of relevant social questions. Since no answers are given, the level of accuracy and fairness would depend entirely on the responses of the group and its instructor.

The nature of the discussion questions would seem to encourage examining more than one aspect of each.

Overall summary/comment:

This package appears to be well developed and potentially very interesting. Upon completion of the course, participants should have a good idea of the compostion and the dynamics of their school community, as well as an enhanced understanding of the characterisitcs of today's youth culture and values, of the problems (and perhaps some solutions) in the relationship between parents and children today. The open-ended nature of the course could make it very valuable and instructive, particularly with a knowledgeable leader to guide the discussions and study.